

The City of Minneapolis Department of Community Planning and Economic Development Department (CPED) is seeking proposals focused on creative and innovative ways to enhance neighborhood business district vitality.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Healthy neighborhood business districts play a crucial role in the vibrancy of Minneapolis and are critical to the overall health of the local economy. Neighborhood businesses are at the core of urban living and contribute significantly to the city's quality of life. However, many business districts in Minneapolis face competitive challenges due to macroeconomic trends in retailing, real and perceived concerns over parking availability and public safety, and lack of information about local purchasing power and desired products and services.

Each business district is unique, with its own set of opportunities and challenges, and requires a customized approach. Through this RFP, the City's Great Streets Program solicits proposals for a wide range of activities with the overarching goal of strengthening neighborhood business districts and building sustainable mechanisms for ongoing vitality and investment.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible organizations include community development corporations, business associations, neighborhood organizations, and other entities that have the demonstrated capacity to perform business development work or manage a subcontract with an entity that does. Organizations lacking this experience and capacity are encouraged to submit a partnership proposal with an organization that does have this capacity.

ELIGIBLE AREAS

Eligible commercial districts are defined in the City's comprehensive plan as commercial corridors, commercial nodes, activity centers, and LRT station areas and must be the focus of all proposed activities ([Exhibit B](#)). Proposals may be for an entire commercial district, multiple districts, or targeted segments of a district. Businesses outside the designated areas may benefit from the work and participate in activities that are focused on the eligible areas. The program does not support assistance to an individual property or business or a single development project.

The Great Streets program prioritizes City investment in areas with demonstrated need based on several measures of economic health, need, and opportunity. Priority is given to applications in intervene and support areas (see Evaluation Criteria, page 3).

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| <u>Intervene</u> | Areas experiencing social and economic problems with limited private sector interest in development and investment. |
| <u>Support</u> | Areas with some private sector interest in development and business investment, though with market, infrastructure or assembly barriers. |
| <u>Monitor</u> | Areas experiencing very few social or economic problems and with strong market development and business investment activity. |

ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Eligible activities include, but are *not* limited to:

- business recruitment efforts, including market studies¹, trade area analyses, pop-ups², filling vacant storefronts, and shopper surveys;
- district-wide marketing and branding campaigns;
- educational workshops on specific topics of interest to businesses (e.g. using social media for marketing);
- networking opportunities for businesses;
- merchandizing assistance programs to area businesses; and
- member drives.

If you have a question about whether or not what you would like to propose is eligible, contact Rebecca Parrell, 612-673-5018, rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Capital expenditures for streetscape elements, such as banners, garbage receptacles, benches, or artwork are not eligible costs.
- General operations expenses are not eligible for the program. However, staff time to directly provide a service to a business district is an eligible use, and up to 15% of a Great Streets Business District Support contract can be used for contract administration.
- Events, such as music festivals and art crawls, are not an eligible activity. While events may be a marketing strategy for some districts, events can generally be funded through alternate means, including sponsorships and ticket sales.
- Proposals for the same activities funded through the Great Streets program in prior years will not be highly rated. It is not the intention of the BDS program to fund an annual line item in an organization's budget, but rather to fund activities that respond to the changing needs, economic conditions, and character of each business district.
- Financing commercial real estate development projects, physical improvements to a single property, or loans to businesses are not eligible activities, as the City offers such assistance through [other programs](#).
- Technical assistance to businesses is ineligible for this RFP because the City supports technical assistance to businesses through the [Business Technical Assistance Program \(B-TAP\)](#).

GRANT CONTRACTS

The contracts awarded through this RFP are performance-based contracts. During the contracting period, organizations develop a Scope of Services based on the contents of their organization's proposal with their City contract manager. Contract payments are made by the City based on invoices and documented deliverables submitted by the organizations.

¹ Before submitting a proposal for market research, see the [market data reports](#) prepared by City staff. These reports and additional market data are available and customizable to Minneapolis organizations. The City will not support contracts that duplicate this type of data. Please contact Rebecca Parrell (612-673-5018) to discuss potential market analysis proposals.

² Examples include: <http://www.artistsinstorefronts.com/>, <http://www.hennepintheatretrust.org/madehere>, <http://www.popuphood.com/>, <http://downtownpittsburgh.com/what-we-do/programming/project-pop-up>

**Proposals are due by
Thursday, February 27, 2014, 4:00 p.m.**

If your proposal is awarded a contract, the contents of your proposal, and any clarification to the contents, may be incorporated by reference into the contract with the City. Only include activities in your proposal that your organization is committed to doing through a contract with the City.

Organizations awarded contracts may elect to receive an advance of up to 10% of the total contract amount. The advance will be tied to specific contract deliverables and the organization will be required to demonstrate successful completion of the deliverable(s) tied to the advance. Applicants should be able to complete the activities within one year of executing a contract with the City. Contracts typically run from June to June. Individual contracts will not exceed \$50,000. There is no minimum contract amount.

PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND DEADLINE

Applicants must submit (1) the [Online Proposal Submittal](#) Form via the City's website and (2) a complete Budget ([Exhibit A](#)) in Excel form via email to rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov on or before Thursday, February 27, 2014 at 4:00 p.m. Proposals **will not be accepted** after the deadline. The City will acknowledge receipt of proposals by emailing the contact emails listed with a courtesy email within 24 hours of receiving the proposal or by 4:30 p.m. on February 27. It is the responder's responsibility to assure they submit their proposal on time.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

A committee of City staff and outside partners in commercial district revitalization will review proposals by considering the following criteria and make a recommendation to the City Council for funding. The maximum score a proposal can receive is 50 points.

1. Capacity (10 pts max) *Organizational and consultant performance under previous contracts will be considered.*
2. Need, Outcomes & Impact (10 pts max)
3. Best Practices (5 pts max)
4. Feasibility and Readiness (5 pts max)
5. Leverage (10 pts max) *Both the answers to questions 14-15 on the Online Proposal Submittal Form and the Budget will be considered when evaluating Leverage.*
6. Priority Areas (Intervene areas 10 pts, Support areas 5 pts, Monitor areas 0 pts)

In addition to these criteria, the City will consider the distribution of investments across eligible areas citywide. The City may, in its sole discretion, expand or reduce the criteria upon which it bases its final decisions regarding selection of which business district support activities to fund.

RFP INQUIRIES AND PRE-PROPOSAL MEETING

Prospective responders should direct questions **in writing** to the department contact person, Rebecca Parrell, at rebecca.parrell@minneapolismn.gov. All questions are due no later than Monday, February 17, 2014. Questions will be answered in writing and posted on the [CPED RFP website](#) on Wednesday, February 19, 2014. The department contact cannot vary the terms of the RFP.

A pre-proposal meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 11, 2014 from 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. at the Crown Roller Mill office building, located at 105 Fifth Avenue South, Suite 200. Attendance is not required.

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Thursday, February 27, 2014, 4:00 p.m.**

ANTICIPATED TIMELINE

RFP Issued	Thursday, January 23, 2014
Informational Meeting	Tuesday, February 11, 2014
Deadline for Written Questions	Monday, February 17, 2014
Submission Deadline for Proposals	Thursday, February 27, 2014
Proposal Review and Evaluation	March 2014
Recommendation to City Council CD Committee	Tuesday, April 15, 2014
Contracting	May 2014

CITY CONTRACTING REQUIREMENTS

City requirements vary depending on the type of assistance being provided. The following list may not be exhaustive.

1. **Data Practices** – The recipient must agree to comply with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act and all other applicable state and federal laws relating to data privacy or confidentiality and hold the City, its officers and employees harmless from any claims resulting from the recipient's unlawful disclosure or use of data protected under state and federal laws.
2. **Intellectual Property** – The recipient must agree to provide the City with the right to royalty-free, non-exclusive license to reproduce, publish or otherwise use and to authorize others to use any intellectual property created using the grant funds. Work covered by this provision shall include inventions, improvements, discoveries, databases, computer programs, reports, notes, studies, photographs, negatives, designs, drawings, electronic files, specifications, materials, tapes or other media.
3. **Billboard Advertising** – Through Ordinance 109.470, City and City-derived funds are prohibited from use to pay for billboard advertising as a part of a City project or undertaking.
4. **Conflict of Interest/Code of Ethics** – The recipient must agree to be bound by the City's Code of Ethics, Minneapolis Code of Ordinances.
5. **Hold Harmless** – The recipient shall agree to defend, indemnify and hold the City harmless from any and all claims or lawsuits that may arise from the recipient's activities under the provisions of the Contract, that are attributable to the acts or omissions, including breach of specific contractual duties of the recipient or the recipient's independent contractors, agents, employees or officers.

EXHIBITS

- A. [Budget](#)
- B. [Great Streets Eligible Areas Map](#)